

Missouri Assessment Program

**Communications Arts
Practice Test**

Grade 9

Student's Name _____
(please print first name and last name)

Teacher's Name _____
(please print first name and last name)

School District _____

Building/Room _____

Date _____

Form 38

Do not open test booklet until instructed to do so.

Into the Primitive
From The Call of the Wild

By Jack London

“Old longings nomadic leap,
Chafing at custom’s chain;
Again from its brumal sleep
Wakens the ferine strain.”

Buck did not read the newspapers, or he would have known that trouble was brewing, not alone for himself, but for every tidewater dog, strong of muscle and with warm, long hair, from Puget Sound to San Diego. Because men, groping in the Arctic darkness, had found a yellow metal, and because steamship and transportation companies were booming the find, thousands of men were rushing into the Northland. These men wanted dogs, and the dogs they wanted were heavy dogs, with strong muscles by which to toil, and furry coats to protect them from the frost.

Buck lived at a big house in the sun-kissed Santa Clara Valley. Judge Miller’s place, it was called. It stood back from the road, half hidden among the trees, through which glimpses could be caught of the wide cool veranda that ran around its four sides. The house was approached by gravelled driveways which wound about through wide spreading lawns and under the interlacing boughs of tall poplars. At the rear things were on even a more spacious scale than at the front. There were great stables, where a dozen grooms and boys held forth, rows of vine-clad servants’ cottages, an endless and orderly array of outhouses, long grape arbors, green pastures, orchards, and berry patches. Then there was the pumping plant for the artesian well, and the big cement tank where Judge Miller’s boys took their morning plunge and kept cool in the hot afternoon.

demesne—estate,
region, land attached to a
mansion

And over this
great demesne
Buck ruled. Here

he was born, and here he had lived the four years of his life. It was true, there were other dogs. There could not but be other dogs on so vast a place, but they did not count. They came and went, resided in the populous kennels, or lived obscurely in the recesses of the house after the fashion of Toots, the Japanese pug, or Ysabel, the Mexican hairless—strange creatures that rarely put nose out of doors or set foot to ground. On the other hand, there were fox terriers, a score of them at least, who yelped fearful promises at Toots and Ysabel looking out of the windows at them and protected by a legion of housemaids armed with brooms and mops.

But Buck was neither house-dog nor kennel-dog. The whole realm was his. He plunged into the swimming tank or went hunting with the Judge’s sons; he escorted Mollie and Alice, the Judge’s daughters, on long twilight or early morning rambles; on wintry nights he lay at the Judge’s feet before the roaring library fire; he carried the Judge’s grandsons on his back, or rolled them in the grass, and guarded their footsteps through wild adventures down to the fountain in the stable yard, and even beyond, where the paddocks were, and the berry patches. Among the terriers he stalked imperiously, and Toots and Ysabel he utterly ignored, for he was king—over all creeping, crawling, flying things of Judge Miller’s place, humans included.

His father, Elmo, a huge St. Bernard, had been the Judge’s inseparable companion, and Buck bid fair to follow in the way of his father. He was not so large—he weighed only one hundred and forty pounds—for his mother, Shep, had been a Scotch shepherd dog. Nevertheless, one hundred and forty pounds, to which was added the dignity that comes of good living

and universal respect, enabled him to carry himself in right royal fashion. During the four years since his puppyhood he had lived the life of a sated aristocrat; he had a fine pride in himself, was ever a trifle egotistical, as country gentlemen sometimes become because of their insular situation. But he had saved himself by not becoming a mere pampered house-dog. Hunting and kindred outdoor delights had kept down the fat and hardened his muscles; and to him, as to the cold-tubbing races, the love of water had been a tonic and health preserver.

And this was the manner of dog Buck was in the fall of 1897, when the Klondike strike dragged men from all the world into the frozen North. But Buck did not read the newspapers, and he did not know that Manuel, one of the gardener's helpers, was an undesirable acquaintance. Manuel had one besetting sin. He loved to play Chinese lottery. Also, in his gambling, he had one besetting weakness—faith in a system; and this made his damnation certain. For to play a system requires money, while the wages of a gardener's helper do not lap over the needs of a wife and numerous progeny. The Judge was at a meeting of the Raisin Growers' Association, and the boys were busy organizing an athletic club, on the memorable night of Manuel's treachery. No one saw him and Buck go off through the orchard on what Buck imagined was merely a stroll. And with the exception of a solitary man, no one saw them arrive at

progeny—
descendants,
children, offspring

the little flag station known as College Park. This man talked with Manuel, and money chinked between them.

"You might wrap up the goods before you deliver 'em," the stranger said gruffly, and Manuel doubled a piece of stout rope around Buck's neck under the collar.

"Twist it, an' you'll choke 'em plentee," said Manuel, and the stranger grunted a ready affirmative.

Buck had accepted the rope with quiet dignity. To be sure, it was an unwonted performance: but he had learned to trust in men he knew, and to give them credit for wisdom that outreached his own. But when the ends of the rope were placed in the stranger's hands, he growled menacingly. He had merely intimated his displeasure, in his pride believing that to intimate was to

futilely—useless,
waste of time

command. But to his surprise the rope tightened around his neck, shutting off his breath. In quick rage, he sprang at the man, who met him halfway, grappled him close by the throat, and with a deft twist threw him over on his back. Then the rope tightened mercilessly, while Buck struggled in a fury, his tongue lolling out of his mouth and his great chest panting futilely. Never in all his life had he been so angry. But his strength ebbed, his eyes glazed, and he knew nothing when the train was flagged and the two men threw him into the baggage car.

The Call of the Wild

1. Using details from the passage, compare Buck's life in Santa Clara Valley with your prediction of the new life he will have.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

2. Using examples from the passage explain your feelings about Manuel and his actions.

[illegible]

The Call of the Wild

3. Create a graphic organizer to list five major events of the passage **in the order that they happened**. Be sure to label your graphic organizer and give the graphic organizer a title.

4. Using two details from the passage to support your answer, describe the relationship of Buck to one or more members of the Judge's household.

The Call of the Wild

Alternate Constructed-Response Item

The author uses personification to describe Buck in the passage. Give two examples of the use of personification in Buck’s description and explain their meanings.

Circle the letter of the correct answer for Questions 5 and 6.

5. What is the meaning of the word “egotistical” in the sentence in which London describes Buck as “ever a trifle egotistical, as country gentlemen sometimes become”?
- A. generous
 - B. lazy
 - C. rich
 - D. vain
6. Which element of fiction does London use in the phrase, “Buck did not read the newspapers, or he would have known that trouble was brewing”?
- A. foreshadowing
 - B. theme
 - C. setting
 - D. tone

The Call of the Wild

7. Now you will write a paper in response to a writing prompt. First, read the prompt in the box below.

You will now have 45 minutes for your prewriting activities such as brainstorming, listing, outlining, and writing a rough draft. Use the pages in the test booklet labeled “prewriting” to record your ideas and your rough draft.

You will then have another 45 minutes in which to write your final paper. Use the pages in the test booklet labeled “final paper” to record your completed work.

Think about the responsibilities of people toward animals. Write a paper to your teacher describing the relationships between people and animals and your feelings about those relationships.

Prewriting

[illegible]

Prewriting

[illegible]

The Call of the Wild

Prewriting

[illegible]

Prewriting

[illegible]

Prewriting

[illegible]

Final Paper

[illegible]

Final Paper

[illegible]

Final Paper

[illegible]

Final Paper

[illegible]